

sponsors, Senator MARK PRYOR and Senator TED STEVENS.

Throughout the past few years, our Nation has experienced an unfortunately large number of recalls on products that have been imported into our country. Of particular concern to me, and to many of my colleagues, as well as to parents and all citizens across the country are the millions of children's toys that were recalled due to dangerous levels of lead and other toxins or dangerously defective product design or manufacture. These recalls left many parents wondering whether any of the toys they purchased for their children were safe. It was time for the Senate to work together to protect America's consumers and children, and with the passage of H.R. 4040, we have done that and, I believe, done it well.

Much blame has been placed on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, CPSC, for failing to adequately protect consumers from dangerous products entering the United States. Whether this was being too lax with regard to negligible product safety standards for toys and other items produced abroad, or ineffective and often toothless oversight of the manufacturing and design process wherever the toys were made, there is more than enough blame to spread around. While I certainly recognize the important contributions of the dedicated career employees at the CPSC, it is clear that the CPSC lacks the adequate resources, and political will, to combat this growing problem.

With the passage of H.R. 4040, the Senate has taken a very good step toward addressing many of the problems we have seen in recent years by increasing funding for the CPSC, increasing penalties for manufacturers that violate consumer protection laws, reducing the levels of lead in children's products, requiring labeling so that parents can know when their children's toys have been recalled, and allowing State attorneys general to help enforce Federal consumer protection laws for the benefit of citizens throughout West Virginia and across the Nation.

Mr. President, again I would like to express my support for H.R. 4040, as amended by the remark on March 6, 2008, and thank my colleagues for all of their hard work to pass legislation that will better protect consumers and children from dangerous products.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate passed S. 2663, the Consumer Product Safety Commission Reform Act, by an overwhelming margin of 79 to 13. This significant legislation has the potential to benefit every consumer and, most notably, protect America's children.

Imagine the heartbroken look on a child's face when a favorite toy is confiscated because it's unsafe.

Then try to imagine the much greater pain felt by a parent whose child has been poisoned or injured or even killed by an unsafe toy.

So far this year, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, CPSC, has issued no fewer than six toy recalls

just due to lead paint safety violations. These recalls affect over 75,000 toys. There were 473 recalls last year. In fact, as a few of my distinguished colleagues have noted, one of the "must-have" toys last year, AquaDots, was recalled just prior to the holidays—and for good reason. The Dots contained a potentially coma-inducing toxic coating.

American consumers have the right to expect that the products they buy are safe. The CPSC should be able to provide that assurance. Unfortunately, in recent years, we have seen numerous examples when the CPSC has not been up to the job.

The CPSC has suffered from the antiregulatory zeal that has been popular in recent years. Products under the Commission's jurisdiction cause more than 28,000 deaths and 33.6 million injuries each year, but funding for CPSC has been slashed and the staff is half the size it was 30 years ago.

The bill the Senate has passed will strengthen the CPSC by giving it the staff, enforcement powers, and other resources it needs to monitor a rapidly changing and ever-expanding global marketplace. S. 2663 will give American consumers—89 percent of whom are aware of the recent recalls—greater peace of mind.

S. 2663 provides critical budget and staffing resources necessary to provide for increased safety monitoring. The bill bans lead from children's products and subjects all toys to comprehensive hazard testing. And it mandates independent testing of many children's products. But all the increased testing and regulations in the world are only as good as the ability to back them up with meaningful penalties for violators. So S. 2663 increases the per-violation civil penalties cap to help deter violations.

I am grateful to the bill managers for including my amendment—No. 4103—to address the issue of training standards for safety inspectors. S. 2663 nearly doubles current funding levels over the next 7 years—which I think is a good idea. And it increases the CPSC staff to at least 500 by 2013—which I also think is a good idea. But if there is going to be a rapid expansion of the staff, I think it would be useful for the CPSC to develop training standards for product safety inspectors and technical staff and to consult with a broad range of consumer product safety organizations in developing those standards. My amendment merely directs the CPSC to develop such standards—again, in consultation with groups that have expertise in such matters—within 180 days of enactment and to submit a report to Congress on the standards.

I am also grateful the bill managers included an amendment, No. 4113, Senator OBAMA and I introduced to clarify, expand, and standardize the information contained in recall notices.

We have passed a bill that will help keep dangerous products off store shelves, out of our homes, and out of the hands of our children and grandchildren. We have passed a bill that

will help restore consumer confidence in product safety. I am proud the Senate has passed this legislation, and I congratulate the bill managers—Senators PRYOR, STEVENS, INOUE and COLLINS—for crafting it and bringing it to the floor with such broad, bipartisan support.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I wish to speak on the Consumer Product Safety Commission Reform Bill, which the Senate passed earlier today. I was pleased to cast my vote in support of this important bipartisan bill, and I thank Senators PRYOR and STEVENS for their hard work in bringing this measure to the floor.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission, or CPSC, is one of our Nation's most important Federal agencies. The Commission's principal responsibility entails protecting Americans from risks associated with products sold in the United States. Each year, it develops and enforces safety standards for thousands of goods. These goods range from toys to housewares.

We live in an age of increasing global trade. Consequently, the activities of the CPSC here become more important, as Americans purchase and consume a greater number of products manufactured in foreign nations. In order to meet these expanded responsibilities, the CPSC requires enhanced resources and authorities. I am pleased that the bill passed today provides these enhanced resources and authorities.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission reform bill includes new safety standards for a variety of products, including cigarette lighters, furniture, swimming pools, equestrian helmets, portable gasoline containers, strollers, and cribs. It strengthens the certification of safety-standard compliance, establishes more stringent standards on lead in paint, reforms third-party testing for product safety and compliance, and increases civil and/or criminal penalties for noncompliance. The bill also increases CPSC personnel in major ports-of-entry, prohibits CPSC personnel from taking industry-sponsored travel, prohibits the sale of products that are the subject of a recall, expands jurisdiction of the CPSC to cover amusement park rides at a fixed site, and fosters greater coordination among the various agencies involved in consumer safety issues.

Further, the legislation doubles the current CPSC authorization level for fiscal year 2009 to \$88,500,000, and increases the level to \$155,900,000 by fiscal year 2015. This bill also authorizes \$40 million for fiscal year 2009 for the improvement of the Commission's research, development, and testing facilities, and also provides \$1 million for fiscal year 2009 for research into safety issues related to the use of nanotechnology in consumer products.

I am particularly pleased that the bill contains two provisions that I